

Serial No. 10/720,224
Group Art Unit: 3721
Amdt. dated May 26, 2005
Reply to Office Action of April 5, 2005

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Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (original) A method for sealing a flexible tube containing a fluid, comprising:
driving opposed jaws disposed about said tube toward each other;
as said jaws deform said tube, controlling speed and rate of speed of said jaws in order to reduce turbulence of the fluid and vibration of the tube;
driving said jaws into abutment, with said tube interposed therebetween, and applying a sealing pressure for a dwell time; and
thereafter retracting said jaws.
2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said controlling comprises decelerating said jaws prior to said driving said jaws into abutment.
3. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said controlling comprises decelerating said jaws to a stopped position whereat said jaws are spaced apart and maintaining said stopped position for a pre-determined time prior to said driving said jaws into abutment.
4. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said jaws are driven by a motor, said motor stalling when said jaws are driven into abutment, said applying a sealing pressure comprising torquing said motor, while stalled.

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5. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said opposed sealing jaws comprise a first jaw with a heated ribbon and a second jaw acting as a backstop for said first jaw.

6. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein said control comprises decelerating said jaws over a time window during which said jaws are expected to impact said tube.

Claims 7 to 17 (cancelled).

18. (new) The method of claim 1 wherein said jaws are driven along a linear path.

19. (new) The method of claim 18 wherein said jaws are driven by a motor through a driving element connected to said motor for linear movement.

20. (new) The method of claim 19 wherein said motor is a rotary motor and further comprising a threaded shaft coupled to an output of said motor, said driving element being threaded to said shaft.

21. (new) The method of claim 1 wherein said jaws are driven in opposite directions with an identical motion profile throughout their cycle.